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ABSTRACT

Carl Jung labeled people who use sensing or intuition as a preferred function for dealing with their environment as "perceiving" types who prefer to process information, and those whose dominant function is thinking or feeling as "judging" types who prefer to make decisions. The outstanding quality of perceiving types is their flexibility, and for judging types it is a sense of responsibility and order. The highest school drop-out rate can be found among sensing perceiving (SP) learners. This type of personality, driven by a need to be totally free and to live for the moment, is relatively unmotivated by long term goals. Lock such a freedom-oriented being into a super structure such as a school and the result is a natural resistance and resentment so powerful as often to prevent any learning. The SP is labeled dumb, stubborn, lazy, hyperactive, or withdrawn. One such SP student, when interviewed about her English class, stated that she hated having to write rambling essays and looking for the hidden meanings in literature and poetry. She wanted unscheduled, nonintuitive, relevant, specific here-and-now learning. She also enjoyed just listening to discussions. Schools must accommodate this learning style with instructional techniques that appeal to the sense by varying routines, by allowing physical movement, and by acknowledging that students can and do learn by listening, not just participating, in discussions. (HTH)

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THE RELUCTANT LEARNER

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THE RELUCTANT LEARNER

That some students are reluctant to learn in almost any educational environment is a painful reality for teachers, parents and predominantly, the learner himself. That many of these students share a common learning style is only being discovered by researchers in the field. (Lawrence, 1979) (Mamchur, 1982) (Myers, 1980).

The basis of the learning style descriptors used by these researchers is an examination of personality constructs as described by Carl Jung. Jung observed that two basic attitudes seemed to prevail man's conscious mind. One was an EXTRAVERTED, outward moving, action-oriented attitude; and the other an INTROVERTED, inward looking, reflective-oriented attitude. Next, Jung began to examine the manner in which people process information. He found that most people prefer to perceive consciously through the SENSES, whereas a smaller segment of the population only subconsciously gather data this way, consciously preferring a more elusive tool of perception, that of INTUITION. He added another major focus to his penetration into the understanding of personality. That is, the way in which people make decisions. This category he called the thinking and feeling function. About half the population prefer to make decisions in a logical, analytical, THINKING manner. The other half prefer to make decisions in an equally rational, but more subjective FEELING manner, based on a personal value system. This system of classification of the way people function has come to be commonly called Jungian typology.

Jung explained typology, often from the point of view of "dominant" or "favorite" or "most often used" function. That function can be either sensing or intuition or thinking or feeling. Myers (1972) has utilized this classification of dominant function as a means of explaining how individuals interact with the environment. Those folks who use sensing or intuition as a favorite function for dealing with the environment are labeled PERCEIVING types. They like best to process information. Those folks whose dominant function is thinking or feeling are labeled JUDGING types. They like best to

make decisions. Each type has distinct attributes. The outstanding and much admired quality of perceiving types is their flexibility. For judging types it is a sense of responsibility and order.

THE SENSING PERCEIVING (SP) TYPE

Several longitudinal studies (Kersey, 1978) (McCaulley, 1977) (Myers, 1976) show that those students preferring the SENSING way of functioning and the PERCEIVING way of interfacing with the environment seemed most resistant to institutional learning. These students were those with a combination of sensing and perceiving attributes. The sensing attributes commonly seen are:

a love for fact

a need for relevancy

an appreciation of the practical

a tendency to cling to the certainty of actual things

a materialism

a preference to focus on the here and now

The perceiving attributes commonly seen are:

a love for the spontaneous

a dislike of time schedules

a need for a release from the rigidity of rules, of patterns, of constant, fixed ways of organizing their lives

a desire to be aware of process

a reluctancy to take initiative in decision-making

a flexibility in attitude

a tendency to leave things to the last minute

a love for surprise

The highest drop out rate can be found among sensing perceiving (SP) learners.

Only one percent of teachers are SP types. This type, in contrast to all others, is relatively unmotivated by long term goals. This type of personality is driven by a need to be free, free to do whatever he wishes, whenever he wishes. The overall goal of this type is freedom. Not freedom as an end, or a means to an end. There is, essentially, no purpose in life, there is only BEING. This most process-oriented type acts on impulse, not design. The goal, then, is to have no goal. The king of whim and whimsey, the SP is a follower of Dionysus, god of music, song and dance, god of joy.

SP types can become great performing artists. They play musical instruments or sing, for example, not to become great, but to DO. And by so doing, become great. It is not the goal, simply a pleasant side effect of the endless pursuit of doing, doing, and doing again.

Lock such a freedom-oriented being into a super structure and the result is a natural resistance and resentment so powerful as to often prevent any learning. The SP becomes labelled as dumb, stubborn, lazy, even insane. If the SP child is extraverted, hyperactivity often is apparent. The introverted SP is, on the other hand, markedly withdrawn.

To teach such children is at best frustrating. To mother such a child can often be heartbreaking. I have spoken to many such mothers. I am one. My daughter, Mickey, is an introverted SP. She started "withdrawing" from regular school in kindergarten, even though she could read when she was four years old. By the tenth grade it was all I could do to coax Mickey to attend guitar class for one hour twice a week with a teacher she especially liked. School had become unbearable.

Today she is attending a Quaker boarding school in which freedom, responsibility, relevance are key words. The school is small, intimate, community-centered. Students are as responsible as the adults for maintaining, even building the school. It is situated in the heart of the mountains, beside the loveliest river in British Columbia.

Even in this ideal and idyllic setting, wher[illegible] FLEXIBILITY and FREEDOM TO DO

(two absolute musts for the SP child) are afforded the student, my daughter and three other SP students in the school have difficulty. But they are surviving, they are learning, and slowly they are coming to be understood.

Understanding becomes a key issue in using knowledge of learning style to help the reluctant learner. Even for the learner herself to understand "why she is so different" eases a lot of tension and self doubt. Acceptance can then occur. Acceptance on the part of the student and the teacher. Adjustments, concessions must be made by both parties engaging in this social contract we call schooling.

But understanding does not come easy. It is human nature to expect others to behave in ways similar to ourselves. It finally dawned on me, when presented with the prospect of writing this paper, to ask my daughter about her learning preferences. I asked her two questions:

1. What do you like about English class?
2. What do you dislike?

These are her exact words, her voice trembled as she spoke. "In school I HATE (I had not mentioned hating, I had actually asked about liking) .. In school I HATE doing ridiculous things that don't make any sense. I hate !*#* essays, all those rambling ideas, demands of 'show the significance of this, relate this to that.' I HATE it!" (It is an interesting fact that most English teachers are intuitive types. Intuitives value the world of possibility, of relationships, of hypothesis.) She continued, "I hate school. This is true. I hate school. And I hate intuitive things. Let me be more specific," she added in true sensing fashion, "Hold on, let me think,...I don't like teaching that goes on and on, that demands we go behind a thing, to find the secret meaning. I mean, it is what it is. I wish teachers could let it go at that." (Sensing types are realists. Intuitives are dreamers.) And finally she added, "The last thing that I hate about school is scheduled things. I hate time tables, doing the same thing everyday. I hate that."

And indeed, true to her type Mickey wanted unscheduled, non intuitive, relevant,

specific, here and now learning.

It was more difficult to coax from her what she liked about what was going on in the English class. Finally, she admitted, "In English class I like discussing things that are really relevant, like the situation in El Salvador, that was ace. Going on the peace march to Washington, now that made sense. I like one word answer tests, match and mismatch. I like ABC choices. Not those damn questions that have forty possible right answers." (All of these were typical preferences of the practical, realistic fact-oriented sensing type). "And mostly I like to go with the flow, do what we want, not have all the tasks predetermined. If something comes up, go for it." (This third point I could understand. Even though an intuitive type, I can appreciate the natural and powerful dynamic involved in the teaching moment. The SP not only appreciates it, but is starved without it). "And fourth, Mom, I like to know what's happening."

(I wasn't quite sure what she meant by that one.) "Where?" I asked.

"Everywhere. In class, in the world everywhere."

(It was a combination of a plea for relevance and a request to be in on the process. She wanted to be free to observe the process, to be aware of what was happening because that is how she learns best.)

And finally, she added, "I guess I like reading a story and answering specific questions or discussing about the story."

"Discussing?" I asked, surprised, knowing my daughter's introversion and reluctance to speak out in class.

"Yes, I like to LISTEN."

That aspect of discussion had never occurred to the extravert in me. If one doesn't participate in the discussion, one isn't learning, right? Wrong. The introverted SP loves to be ACTIVELY involved in the PROCESS of RELEVANT discussion by LISTENING, by OBSERVING.

"But how do you learn?" I asked, still not hearing, still not believing what my

child and my understanding of typology were telling me.

"Mom, I am a good listener. I am a good observer. I'm not being a space cadet in the corner."

I guess the question I was really asking, was, "But how will your teacher know you are learning?"

"She could ask me."

Ask me. It was true. That had not occurred to me either. It probably occurs to few teachers. I was learning something very important about the nature of participation for the introverted SP learner. And about the nature of trust.

Mickey and I continued our discussion on learning in the English classroom. I had to push both her and myself to discover how the SP child would know whether or not she were learning. It was easy, we discovered, when it came to skills. She could read, she could play the guitar. Even attitudes were relatively easy to assess, eventually becoming apparent from her actions. But what about her ability to understand concepts? That one perplexed me. "How do you know you are understanding the significance, for example, of a poem?"

"I just know," Mickey replied, "from the questions that run through my head. I know that if I am confused, if I don't have enough FACTS, that I should listen, and think of questions I would ask, and then WAIT for them to be answered... Questions like, "Who is that? What does this have to do with that?...If they aren't answered, IF I am thoroughly confused, I check it out."

And suddenly, for the first time, after having studied and taught typology for years, I finally truly understood what I myself meant when I said, "Extraverts learn by talking to others, introverts TALK INSIDE THEIR HEADS." Participation suddenly took on a new meaning. Introverts hate for participation to "count" because quiet participation doesn't count. Only the kind the teacher can see or hear counts. The fine tuning isn't there.

And suddenly I realized that like all other teaching tools, knowledge of learning style can only work if other qualities of good teaching are also prevalent. To truly internalize the nature of students' learning style–especially when they are opposite to their own–demands a big change in teachers' attitudes. There are many components of good teaching which are precursory to adaptive use of learning style. In this particular instance regarding participation by an introverted student, successful teaching is incumbent on trust, empathy, large-goal-orientation. It demands positive regard. And, perhaps, penultimately it relies on an understanding of typology to make an already good situation better. A deeper understanding more possible.

WHAT SCHOOL MUST BE

In conclusion, school must become, for the SP child, "a place to learn." Simply so. Less is more. They must provide a stimulating, relevant environment, full of important, factual things to see and hear and smell and taste and touch. They must provide opportunity to move and act and be. And they must allow the SP to observe and enter into the process as he feels a need to, permitting the SP to decide when that is.

It is important to remember that SP learners CANNOT sit for long hours in straight rows of desks, memorizing lists of spelling words so that one day they might be successful in writing a job application. SP learners value activity, risk and adventure. They need to be spontaneous, able to do the unexpected. Drama, visual aids, video tapes, anything appealing to the senses, appeals to the SP. They follow impulse rather than well laid plans. They love things - things to do, things to make, things to touch, things to keep. And finally and most important, teachers must remember to keep in mind that SP's are often misunderstood and undervalued by themselves, their peers, parents, and teachers.

I have spoken and worked with too many SP adults who have been strapped in school, who have hidden in empty garages rather than go to school, who have been

transferred from school to school, who have finally withdrawn or were expelled. I have worked in therapy with extraverted SPs who received shock treatment because they were diagnosed as mad. Some appear in juvenile court for repeated acts of stealing. The acts perplex everyone involved. The extraverted SP can display such an unconscious simultaneous love for things and sense of impulsive, immediate need that material things are "borrowed" and then promptly forgotten. This becomes a conundrum so complex as to go beyond the limits of this paper. It is enough to say that the ramifications of individual differences must be explored from a vantage point of understanding and acceptance before growth has a chance. On a less devastating, but almost equally perplexing note, is the hyperactivity of extraverted SPs. They can be constant movers-jiggling, wiggling, jumping, talking, disturbing and infinitum. Teachers have reported to me such events as the extraverted SP who actually rocked her desk into such motion it broke to splinters crashing the agitated occupant to the floor. I have been told of such students being tied to desks, of being put into large cardboard boxes to "temper" their natures.

What a tragedy. A response to a need for movement is forced confinement! How much easier to work with the energy instead of against it. The extraverted SP needs large, small and in-between body movement. Action is the key. Every opportunity to move must be not only allowed, but created. To learn to write the letter A, an extraverted SP six-year-old needs not only to sit quietly at a desk, pencil in hand. He needs to get up to the board and write A forty times moving across the entire expanse of the blackboard. He needs to make As out of clay and sand and wood and cardboard, moulding and shaping and sawing and hammering and cutting and pasting. He needs to tramp an A in the snow with his feet. He needs to find an A in the alphabet box and hand it to the teacher.

An extraverted SP who loves material things should be encouraged to collect stamps, records, dolls. A surfeit of things should surround the little SP consumer. She

can be taught to collect and trade items. To make the things she likes.

This plea goes beyond a desire to keep SP students out of juvenile courts, out of cardboard boxes, out of quiet corners. Making things may "slow down" the anxious collector to appreciate the product a bit more. It must be remembered that it is in the nature of this child to want things immediately. Let SPs collect bubble gum covers and you will find them buying whole cartons of bubble gum at a time. I have witnessed my daughter spend every cent of her allowance on a carton of such foul testing candy that she threw it out, stacked the coveted paper cards in a drawer, and having collected them all in one full swoop, promptly forgot them! Finally, I must add my belief that if "stealing" is part of the SP's pattern the only way to teach society's system of ownership is to abandon negativity, judgement and punishment. And replace it with patience, understanding and acceptance of a different perspective, a different view of the way things are. Of all types this is the most joyful, the most full of spontaneous pleasure. "Look at the rainbow," says my daughter: and I search for a hidden pot of gold. She sees the glorious colour of sky, now. For the SP, now is all there is, or need be. And in the easy acceptance and appreciation of the immediate, comes a silent promise of tomorrow, simply understood and simply accepted. Uncomplicated, real, pleasure-loving, eager to do, impossible to be bound, these seekers of freedom can become the most entertaining and psychologically attractive, healthy members of any classroom. They can become magical.

> Beware, beware his flashing eyes, his floating
> hair! For he on honey-dew hath fed, and drunk
> the milk of Paradise
>
> Kubla Khan

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Appendix A (from INSIGHTS, Open Court, in press)

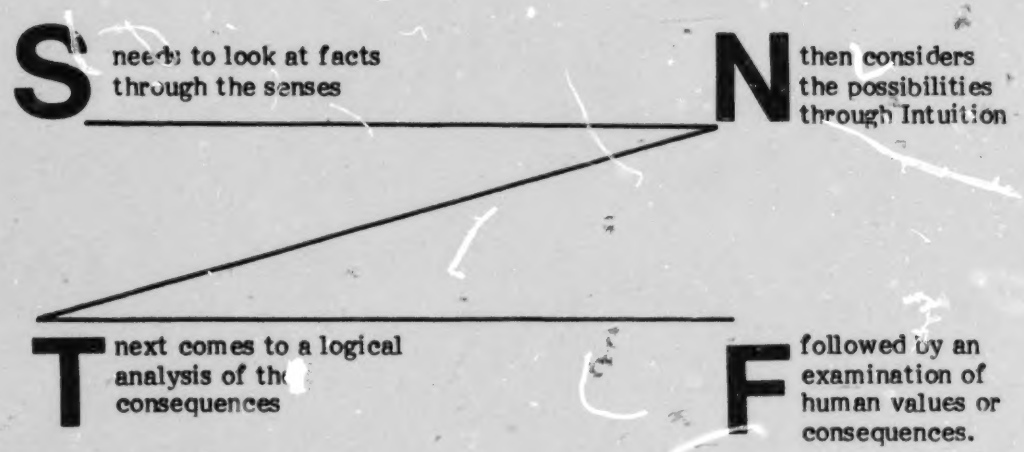
TYPOLOGY, A CLOSER LOOK

In examining typology, it is fundamental to understand that Jung considered the various "types" occurring in human nature to be archetypal -

> which is itself an irrepresentable, unconscious, pre-existent form that seems to be part of the inherited structure of the psyche and can therefore manifest itself spontaneously anywhere, at any time.
>
> (Jung, 1965, p. 392)

Such words as natural, instinctive, automatic, help to clarify the notion of the archetype. It is obvious that at times some folks are extraverted (outward moving, action-oriented), or deal best in the outer world of people and things, and at other times are introverted (inward looking, reflective-oriented), preferring to deal quietly with ideas inside their own heads. However, one attitude is more natural, more instinctive, more automatic than the other. That one is the archetypal preference.

It is sometimes useful to think of the functions as a large Z pattern. Everyone


S needs to look at facts through the senses
N then considers the possibilities through Intuition
T next comes to a logical analysis of the consequences
F followed by an examination of human values or consequences.

These four functions (sensing, intuition, thinking, feeling) all coexist, but one is most preferred and one is least preferred by each one of us.

Those who prefer the perceptive function of sensing develop acute powers of observation and awareness. They enjoy dealing with details, with facts, with present

realities. As they develop, sensing types rely more on experience than on theory, trust customary ways of doing things, move cautiously from the known to the unknown, and develop a very sound practical attitude to life, often referred to as "common sense."

Intuitive types, on the other hand, rely on inspiration more than direct experience. They pass quickly over details, see in flashes of insight and work on hunches. Just as the eye teaches the mind of the sensing types, the mind teaches the eye of the intuitive.

Once a person has accumulated data, either through intuition or sensing, then a judgment must be made on that data. Two functions exist, also, for making decisions. These are feeling and thinking. Both are rational processes, insists Jung, and must be accepted as such. The thinking type makes decisions by a logical analysis of the facts. When used in mature and positive manner, this is an objective, impartial process dedicated to fair play and justice. The feeling type, on the other hand, uses a more personal, subjective process to make decisions. Harmony and compassion guide the feeling type in the development of values and standards. Decisions are then made according to these values and standards.

Myers, whose work in applying and extending the concepts of Jungian type has been widely accepted, felt that it would be most useful to distinguish among individuals according to one further criterion, derived from the two pairs of Functions. Whether a person is an extravert or an introvert, she must deal with her environment, her everyday world. How are we most comfortable facing that world? What is our interactive facet, our INTERFACE?

Myers (1962) found that a fourth area of preference exists in each personality, one that favors either Perception or Judging (Decision-making) as a way of coping with its environment. This has important implications for what we see when we look at a person interacting with the world around him. When we observe someone who is more comfortable focusing his energies, coming to closure, gaining control over events,

someone who does not easily tolerate uncertainty or ambiguity, we are looking at a decision-making or Judging (J) type. The person with a Judging Interface seems to aim for singularity, a world of resolution and certainty. The Judging type seems to want a structured life, to work well according to a schedule, to appreciate usable systems.

When, on the other hand, we observe someone who is more interested in taking data, weighing impressions, more concerned with understanding events than controlling them, someone who is uncomfortable with fixed patterns or structures, we are looking at a Perceiving (P) type. The person with a Perceiving Interface seems to aim for plurality, a world of adaptation and change. The Perceptive type seems to want a more flexible lifestyle, with the freedom to respond to impulse.

Judging types do not judge others (as the name unhappily seems to imply), but rather work best, feel more comfortable in, and use most often, their preferred interface of decision-making. In Judging, their preferred function may be either Thinking (T) or Feeling (F). As Judging types are outcome-centered, so Perceiving types are process-centered. They are not more perceptive than Judging types (again as the name may imply) but rather work best and use most often their preferred process of Perception, whether through Sensing (S) or Intuition (N).

Typology might be figuratively imagined like this:

(E)	EXTRAVERT		INTROVERT	(I)
(S) (N)	Sensing or Intuition	Perceiving Function	Sensing or Intuition	(S) (N)
(T) (F)	Thinking or Feeling	Decision Making Function	Thinking or Feeling	(T) (F)
(J) (P)	Judging or Perceiving	Organization of Environment	Judging or Perceiving	(J) (P)